THE KILTARTAN WONDER BOOK



BY LADY GREGORY

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HE CAME DOWN SPREAD LEGS ON A MULE.

THE KILTARTAN WONDER BOOK

BY LADY GREGORY

ILLUSTRATED BY

MARGARET GREGORY

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To

R G. G.

A Kiltartan Child

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THE MULE

WELL, I will tell you the story of a Mule was in the world one time, says the old man who had promised me a codfish and had only brought me a hake.

There were three sons of a King that had died, and they were living together, and there was a stable and a bird, and one of the sons was a bit simple. The bird used to be coming to the stable every morning and to be singing sweetly, and they all three fell in love with it and used to be trying to take it, but they could not. But one day the one that was a bit simple, that they called the Fool, took the tail off it. The bird said to him then: 'You must follow me now until you find me;' and it went away, and he went following after it. And when he was on the height it was in the hollow, and when he was in the hollow it was on the height, and he never could come up with it; and at last it went out of his sight.

He came then to a wall, and he made a leap over it, and where did he come down but spread-legs on the back of a Mule that was in the field. 'Are you a good jock?' says the Mule. 'I am middling good,' says he. 'Hold on so,' says the Mule, 'and I will bring you to the place where the bird is.' There was a wall in front of them—a double wall—and the Mule faced it, and went over it with one leap, and the Fool on his back. 'You are the best jock ever I saw,' says the Mule. 'You are the best Mule ever I saw,' says the Fool. They went on then as far as they could through the course of the day, till the Mule said: 'I'm hungry now; go get me a few grains of oats.' 'How can I do that,' says the Fool, 'when I have no money?' 'Go in there to that inn and get it for me, as I told you,' says the Mule. 'How much will do you?' says he. 'Seven stone,' says the Mule. So they stopped at the inn, and the Fool put him into the stable and bade the innkeeper to give him seven stone of oats. 'Go in now and get your own dinner,' says the Mule. So he went in and he got his

dinner ; and when he was ready to go, the innkeeper asked for the money. 'I have none,' says he. 'Well, I will keep the Mule in the stable till such time as you can pay me,' says the innkeeper, and he went out and was going to lock the stable door, and the Mule gave a kick that broke his leg, and there he was lying on the ground. 'Come on now,' says the Mule ; and the Fool got up on his back, and away with them again, and they came to a wall that was five miles in height. 'At it now,' says the Fool, and the Mule faced at it and crossed it with one leap. 'You are a jock that can't be beat,' says the Mule. 'You are a Mule that can't be beat,' says the Fool.

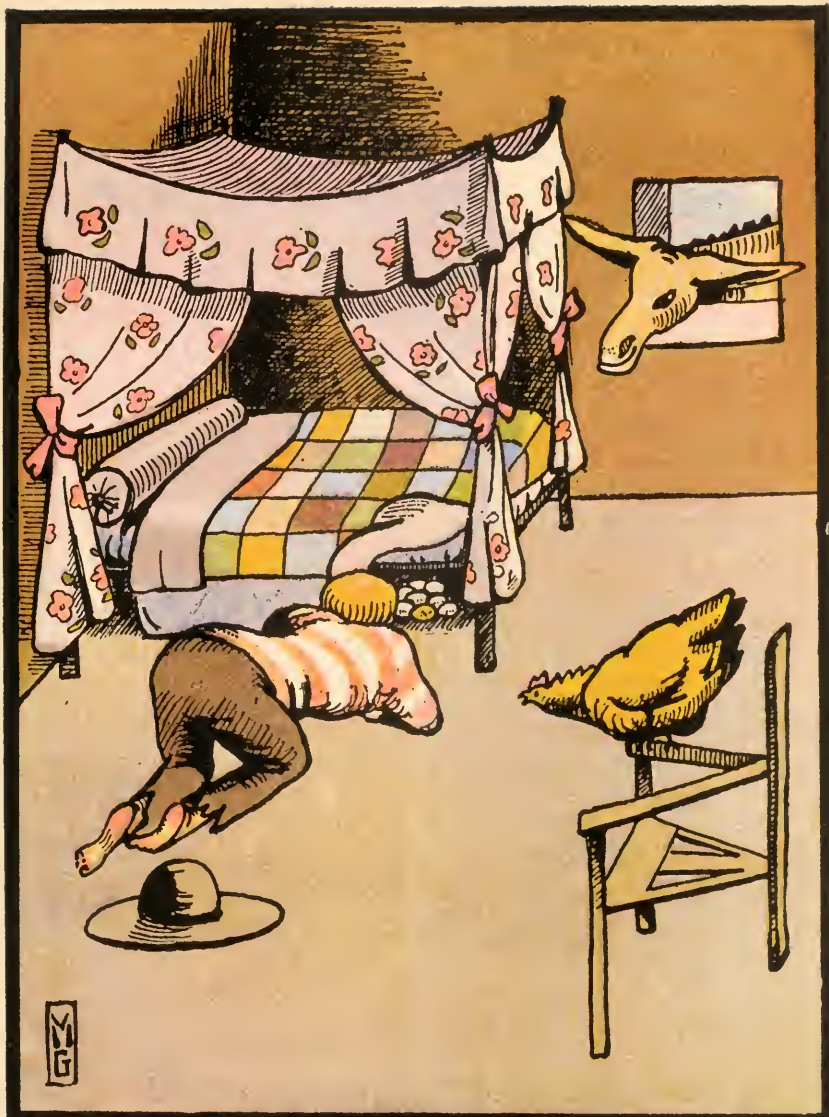
There was before them a lake that was five miles in length and five miles in breadth. 'I am thirsty now,' says the Mule, 'after that feed I had. And I'll stop now till I'll take a drink,' he says. 'Do not,' says the Fool, 'or you will be heavy and not able to go.' 'Wait till you see that,' says the Mule. So he stopped and he began to drink, and he never stopped till he had

drunk up the whole of the lake that was five miles in length and five miles in breadth. They went on again till they came to a mountain that was before them, and the whole of the mountain was in one blaze, and there was a high wall before it, fifteen feet high. 'Hold on now,' says the Mule. 'Here, at it,' says the Fool, and the Mule crossed it with one leap; and when he came where the blaze was, he let out of his mouth all the water of the lake he had swallowed, and it quenched the blaze, and there they saw before them the bird. But if they did it went under ground, and the Mule followed it under ground into the enchanted place where it lived; and when they got there, it was not a bird, but the finest young lady that could be seen, and a King's daughter. The Fool asked her then to come along with him till he would marry her. 'I will not,' she said, 'until such time as you will find my father, that I have hidden away from you.' So he brought the Mule out to the stable, and he didn't know where to go look for the King. And when they were in the

stable the Mule said: 'The young lady has a hen clutching, and the place where it is clutching is in her own room, under her bed. And under it you will find eleven eggs,' he said, 'and one of them is yellow and spotted. And take that one in your hand, and be going to smash it against the floor, and the King that is inside of it will cry out and will ask you to spare his life.' So he went looking for the hen, and all happened as the Mule had said. 'Will you marry me now?' says he to the young lady. 'I will not,' says she, 'till you find my father that I have hidden a second time.' So the place where she hid her father that time was in a duck's bill, and she put the duck out swimming in the middle of a pond. The young man went then to the stable and asked the Mule did he know where the King was hidden, and the Mule told him it was in the duck's bill. 'And look at my tail,' he said, 'and see is there e'er a grey rib in it.' So he looked, and there was a grey rib. 'Pull it out,' says the Mule, 'and bring it to the pond where the duck is, and throw it out over

the water, and however far the duck is, that rib will bring it back to the land. And catch a hold of it then, and threaten to cut the neck of it, and the King will cry out from its bill and ask you to spare him.' So he did all that, and he spared the King, and then he went to the King's daughter. 'Will you marry me this time?' says he. 'I will not,' says she, 'till you find my father the third time.' The place she hid him the third time was in a block of wood, and the Mule said to the young man: 'Take a nail out from my shoe and drive it into the block of wood till you will split it.' So he drew the nail, and he put it on the block of wood, and was going to split it, and the King called out for mercy, and he spared him.

After that he married the young lady, and himself and herself and the old King lived together, and there never were three people happier. And the Mule said: 'Where will I go now?' 'Go back,' says the Fool, 'to your own place, for you know the way well to it. But come back here at the end of seven years,' he said, 'till you'll see



THE KING WAS HID IN THE YELLOW EGG.

how am I getting on.' So at the end of the seven years the Mule came back, and he asked to be taken into service. 'I will never make a servant of you,' says the Fool, 'when I remember all the things you did for me, and all you helped me.' 'If that is so,' says the Mule, 'go and root up that little bush you see beyond, and give me three blows with the stump of it.' So he did that, and with the three blows of the bush the enchantment went from the Mule, and who was he but the young man's own father, the King that was thought to be dead. So they all four lived together then and ever since, and the time I saw them myself they were well and happy and having great riches.

BESWARRAGAL

I WILL tell you the story of Beswarragal, said the old man of a hundred years old.

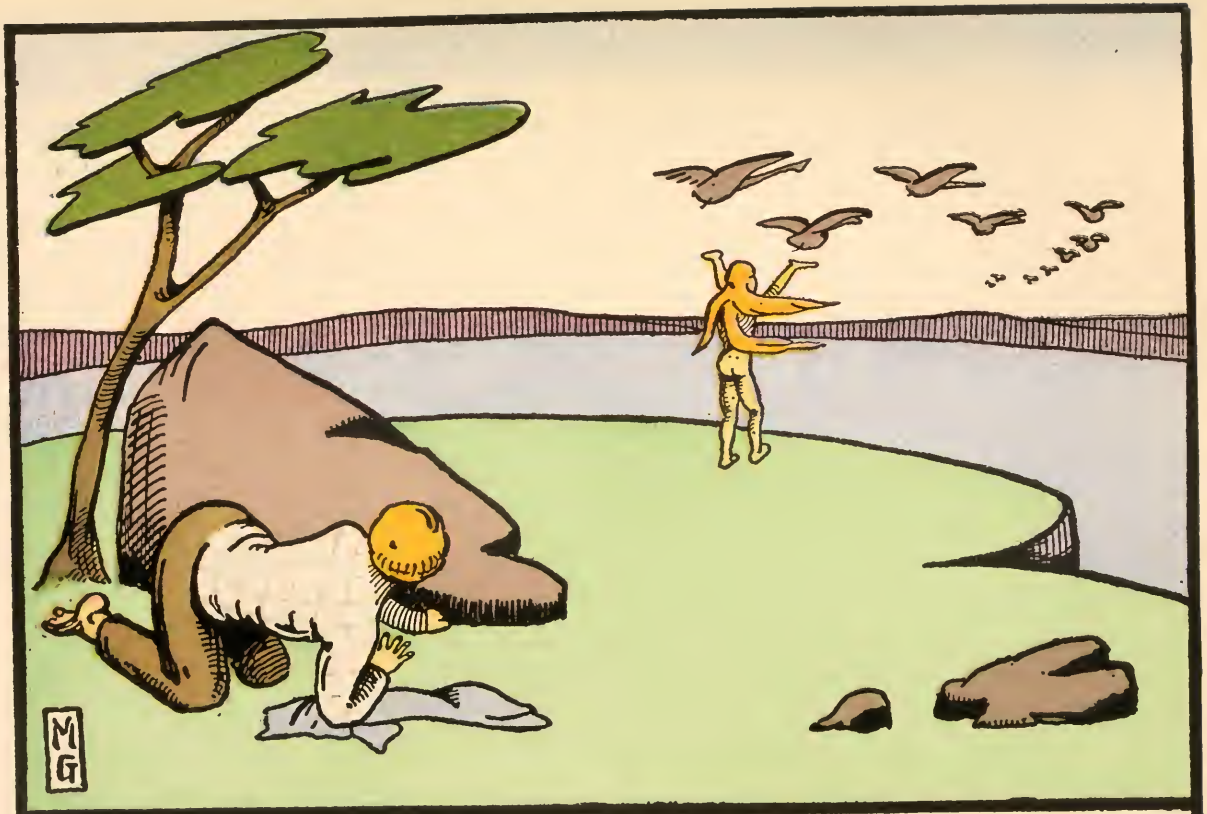
There was a King of Ireland out walking one time with his Grand Adviser. And they came to the side of a pool, and they saw in it a wild duck with a flock of twelve young ones, and she was pushing and beating away one of the young ones to make it leave the flock. 'I wonder why is it the bird is doing that?' said the King. 'It is the right thing, whenever there is a family of twelve, to send one of them away to seek a fortune for himself,' says the Grand Adviser. 'If that is so,' says the King, 'what way can I know which one of my sons must I send away?' 'I will tell you that,' says the Grand Adviser. 'Let you watch them to-morrow the time they are coming home from the school, and close the gate on whichever one of them will be last, and let him be the one you

will send away.' So the next day they watched the twelve sons coming from the school, and the one that was last at the gate was the youngest of them all. 'Oh, give him another chance,' says the King. So the next day they watched again, and it was the same one, the youngest, that was last at the gate; and the third day it was the same thing. 'Oh,' says the King, 'it is worse to me the youngest to go than any two of the others.' 'You need not mind that,' says the Grand Adviser, 'for I can tell you that the life he will have will be a happy one.' 'I am content so,' says the King.

So the King sent for him then, and he gave him a purse of money that would last him for ten years or for twenty years, and he bade him go make a way for himself.

So the King's son set out, and he travelled the roads till night time, and he saw a cottage before him, and a light in it, and he opened the door and went in, and all he saw in it was one old man. 'A welcome

before you, King's son,' says the old man. 'I thank you for that welcome,' says he; 'but how is it you know me to be a King's son?' So the old man showed him a sword that hung over the top of the door. 'If any man comes through that door,' he says, 'that is not a King's son, that sword will fall and will whip the head of him. And it is a good time you came here,' he said, 'and you could have come at no better time.' 'Why is that?' says the young man. 'There is a pool there beyond,' says the old man, 'and one morning in the whole year, there comes to it Beswarragal, that is the most beautiful woman of the whole world, having her twelve waiting maids with her, and they go swimming in that pool. And to-morrow is the day they are coming,' he said, 'and let you hide yourself till they will go into the water, and Beswarragal will be the last to strip, and let you take her clothes and hide them, and she will not be able to go away, and whatever you will ask her she will do it. And what you will ask of her is herself,' he said.



BESWARRAGAL AND HER MAIDENS BATHE.

So the young man went down to the pool, and Beswarragal and her twelve beautiful waiting maids were in the water, and he took her clothes and hid them. And when they were tired swimming they put their clothes on, and then they turned to birds and they flew away, all but Beswarragal, and she could not fly. So the King's son came to her and he gave her the clothes. 'What will you give me now?' says he. 'I will give you anything you will ask,' says she. 'I ask nothing but yourself,' says he; 'you to marry me and to be my wife.' 'How will you go away with me and you not able to fly?' says she. But she put a loop of the chain she had about his neck, and she took him by the hand and she flew away with him to a garden, and she brought him into the gardener's house. 'And there is one thing I have to tell you,' she said; 'you must never wonder at me or say anything about me at all.' 'I will never do that,' says he. And every day she brought him food to the gardener's house, and they lived together there for a while.

(The old man of a hundred years was getting tired, and the old woman that was his wife sent out the old woman sitting on the doorstep to get him a glass of porter. The old man drank a sup of it, and then the story went on.)

But at last one day she passed by him in the garden, and when he saw her so beautiful he turned and he said to the gardener: 'There was never a lady so beautiful as mine in the whole world.' 'There never was,' says the gardener. 'And you will be without her now,' he says.

So the next morning Beswarragal brought him his breakfast, and, 'Oh,' she said, 'why did you speak of me and wonder at me, for I must go away from you now to Righ-na-Sluagh, and you will never see me again.' 'How could I help wondering at you,' he said, 'and you so beautiful passing by? And I will go following after you for ever,' he said.

So she went away, and before she went she left five drops of honey on his five fingers. And he left

the garden, and went following after and looking for her in every place.

He walked on all through the day, and at the fall of night he came to a house that had but an old man in it. 'God be with the company left me to-day,' says he. 'What company was that?' says the King's son. 'Beswarragal and her twelve young girls,' says he. 'That is the one I am looking for,' says the King's son. 'You never will get her,' says the old man. 'But I will do this for you,' he says; 'I will give you a ball when you leave this to-morrow, and you can go throwing it before you, and if you can come up with it as fast as it goes, you will come to my brother and he might help you.'

So after breakfast he took the ball, and he went throwing it and following it through the day till he came to a house where the old man's brother was, and he went in. 'God be with the company that left me to-day—that was Beswarragal and her twelve young ladies,' says the old man. 'She is the one I

am looking for,' says the King's son. 'You never will get up to her,' says the old man; 'but I will do this for you,' he says. 'There are twelve horses in the stable outside; and go into it,' he says, 'and take down the bridle you will see behind the stable door, and shake it, and whatever horse will come and put its head in it, let you get up on it, and it will bring you on the road she is gone.' So after breakfast in the morning he went out into the stable and got the bridle and shook it, and a little *gioblacan* of an Arabian horse came running and put his head into it. 'The devil's welcome to you,' says he, 'and all the good horses there are in the stable!' 'He'll answer you well,' says the old man, 'and get up on him now. And are you a good jock?' he says. 'I am,' says the King's son, and he got up on it. 'Let you leap that now,' says the old man, and he turned the horse to where there was a big estate-wall at the side of the place. 'It is humbugging you are,' says the King's son, 'for there is no one would be able to leap that wall.' But

the little Arabian of a horse rose off the ground, and made the wild cat's bow in the air, and he came down the other side of the wall, but the King's son fell on the ground. But he rose up again and got up on the little horse. 'We will make a start now,' he says. 'You will never get to the place where Beswarragal is,' says the old man, 'for there is a place between this and it, and the birds that fly high in the air fall down in ashes passing over that place, with all the fire that is blazing up a mile high from it, and that is thrown up out of it.'

The pony set out then, and the King's son on his back, and away with them till they came in sight of the fiery place. 'Put your hand in my ear,' says the pony, 'and take out a bottle that is in it, and you will find food for yourself and white-water for myself in it.' So he took the bottle and he gave white-water to the horse, and he rubbed what was in the bottle to its hoofs, and it made a great leap into the air and over the fiery place, and pitched five miles on the other

side, and nothing harmed but that the hair was burned off its belly.

And where they pitched there was a little house, and an old woman in it, and she gave them shelter for the night. And in the night seven men came in, and some having but half a head, and some with their hands and their arms cut off them. 'Who are those and what happened them?' said the King's son. 'They are my own sons,' says the old woman, 'and every night through seven years there are men coming in boats and fighting them, and that leave them that way. And all they kill of them are alive again in the morning,' she said, 'and they themselves will be healed again in the morning as well as before.' 'I will go and kill them,' says the King's son. So he went down to the boats and drove away the men.

Then he went on to a house that was within a quarter of a mile of the house where Beswarragal was, and he asked lodging. 'Why would you come in here,' says the man of the house, 'and why wouldn't

you go where everyone is going—to that big house beyond, where the wedding is going to be?' So he asked for a cook's suit, and he put it on him, and he went on to Beswarragal's house, and there were hundreds and hundreds going into it for her wedding. 'Are you wanting a cook?' says the King's son at the door. 'He was never more wanted,' said they, 'and if there were ten of them they would be welcome.'

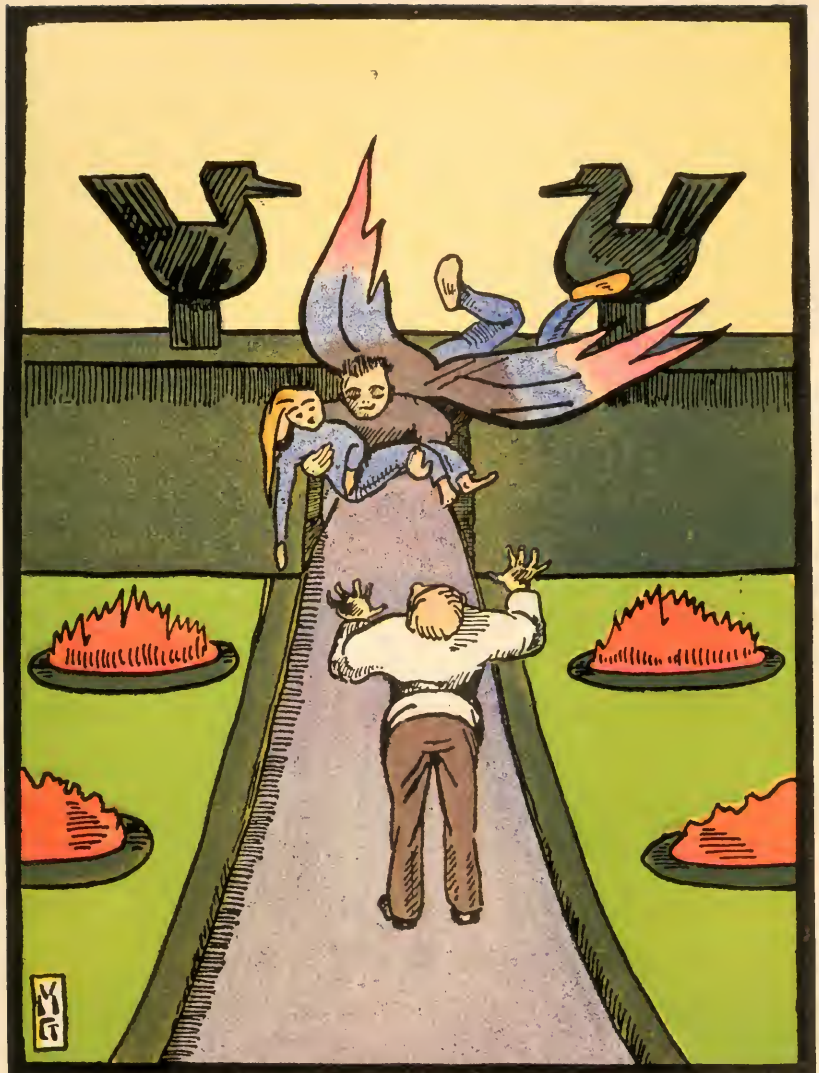
So they sent him to the kitchen, and he asked the head cook for flour and things to mix a cake, and he mixed it; and when he had it made ready to bake he put the print of his five fingers on the top of it, and put it in the oven. And when it was baked he put a cover over it and gave it to the servants that were bringing up the dinner, and he said: 'Give that cake to Beswarragal and to no other one.'

So it was put before her on the table, and she took it to eat a bit of it; and when she tasted it, and that she broke it and saw the five drops of honey in

it, she said: 'Where is the man that made that cake? And wherever he is send him up to me,' she said. For she had found the five drops of honey inside the cake.

So they went for him, and he asked leave to change his cook's suit, and they gave him that. And he came up and Beswarragal knew him, and she put her arms about him. And the man that was to be her husband, he jumped out of the window and broke his skull on the pavement.

So the King's son and Beswarragal went away back to the garden; but it wasn't long till a man came that had wings and could fly, and he stooped down and took up Beswarragal, as if she was a child, and brought her away. The King's son went following her then, and he went on till he came to the man that had wings, and he asked her of him. 'There was a man came that could not fly, but that was a better man than myself,' says he, 'and he took her from me.' So the King's son went on till he found that man, and he



BESWARRAGAL AND THE MAN WITH WINGS.

asked her of him. 'There was a man came,' he said, 'that had seven colours in his eyes, and that took her from me,' he said.

So he went on till he came to the man that had seven colours in his eyes and asked her of him. 'She was brought away from me,' says he, 'by the Queen of the Black Wood. And there is no one will be able to take her out of her hands,' he said.

So the King's son went on, and he had no knowledge what way to get to the Black Wood. And he was passing through a field, and a white *garran* that was in the field spoke to him and said: 'Get up now on my back, and I will bring you as far as the stile that leads into the Black Wood. But there is no one can go into it,' he said, 'because it is as dark as night; and there is no one can face the strength of the Queen that is in that wood.

So the King's son got up on the *garran*, and they went on till they came to the road that was outside the Black Wood, and there was an old man there was

building a castle on a very large flagstone, and he asked the King's son where was he going, and he said he was going to bring away his wife from the Queen of the Black Wood. 'There is no one can do that,' says the old man, 'unless it is the man that will put this castle five yards off the flagstone, with one shove he will give it.' So the King's son went at it, and he gave it one shove, and if he did he put the castle eight yards from the flagstone. 'Oh,' says the old man when he saw that, 'I know you must be my sister's son, for there is no one in the whole world could do that unless my sister's son.' And he put his arms about him and kissed him. And then he bade him to move the flagstone and he did that, and there was a sword under it. 'Take up that sword,' says the old man, 'and be shaking it this way and that way. And according as you will be shaking it, the strength will be going out of the Queen of the Black Wood, and you can go to her when she is left weak,' he said.

So the King's son did as he bade him, and by the

time he came to the Queen, all he had to was to whip the head off her.

So he brought Beswarragal out of the wood, and they went back safe and well again to the garden.

'Is there any meaning in the name Beswarragal?'

'Not a meaning; it was all the name ever she had, and it will be her name ever and always.'

The old wife of the man of a hundred years, who had fallen asleep listening, says to the old woman who was sitting on the doorstep. 'Would you say was there any meaning in the name?' And she says, 'I suppose she was just an enchanted woman.' 'Ah,' says the old man, 'I'll give you three words that will bring you to Heaven as easy as walking out into that street. And I will tell you now about the Seven Fishers.'

THE SEVEN FISHERS

THERE were Seven Fishers went out one time from Galway, and a strange sort of a wind blew one of the seven a long way off out into the sea. And when the fisherman came back, he went up to the house and he called to his daughter and he said: 'I have but the one fish, but let you clean it and bring it to the shop, and it will get us our supper.'

So she brought it out of the boat, and she was cleaning it and rubbing it, and while she was doing that it turned to be a tall fine man standing before her. And he stopped with her for a while, and when he was going away he said: 'You will have two sons, and you will never know want, and your father will get fish every time he will go out. And here is a letter,' he said, 'and give it to the sons at whatever time they will ask tidings of their father.'

So all happened as he said, and she brought up

the sons and reared them, and at the last she sent them to get learning in Dublin. And when they got there they saw ball-playing going on, and there was a dispute, and those that were disputing called out to the young men to settle it, and they gave their opinion. 'Ah,' said the ball-players then, 'who are those that are giving a judgment? Scamps that don't know who is their father.'

Then the young men looked one at another. 'That is true,' they said, 'and we have no business here, but let us go home again.' So they turned and went back, and when they came to Galway there was a hurling, and a gentleman that was at the head of one side came to them and said: 'Two of my own men have failed me, and come you take their place at the hurling.' 'We never played it, and we know nothing of it,' said they. 'No matter,' says he; 'come and stand up now.' So they stood up, and when the ball came near them, the one of them made a leap and struck it, and the other got the goal. And when they

were leaving the field they heard the people saying to one another: 'It is the Fish's sons were the best.'

They looked at one another then, and they went home and asked the mother was she their own mother. 'I am that,' says she. Then they asked news of their father, and she gave them the letter he had left with her. And it gave directions to the eldest son to go to such a cliff, and he would find a flagstone with a keyhole and a key, and it bade him turn the key and take out what he would find in it.

So he went to the cliff and he opened the flagstone, and under it he found a good suit and a horse, and he put on the suit and he got up on the horse. 'How long will you stop on me?' says the horse. 'As long as the saddle is under me,' says he. 'That is not enough,' says the horse. 'Well, as long as the skin is left on you,' says he. 'That will do,' says the horse. So he set out then till he came to the Court of the King of Munster, that had never spoken a word and never made a laugh for seven years.

The Fish's son went in and he asked the King why was he seven years without speaking a word. 'It is my daughter that was brought away from me,' says he, 'by Croagcill, that beat me in a battle, and that no man can beat; for he has the strength of a man in every rib of his hair.' 'I will go bring her back to you,' says the Fish's son.

So they made ready a cake for him, and away with him till he met with an old man, and he asked him did he know where was Croagcill living. 'I never came to the place where he is living,' said the old man, 'and I have been walking for the last four hundred years.'

The Fish's son went on then till he came to a wood and he met with a white hound, and she searching after food. 'It is hungry you are,' says the Fish's son. 'I am not,' says the hound, 'but the young ones I have are hungry.' So he gave her then the half of the cake, and she was very thankful, and she said she would come to his help at any time he would be in need of

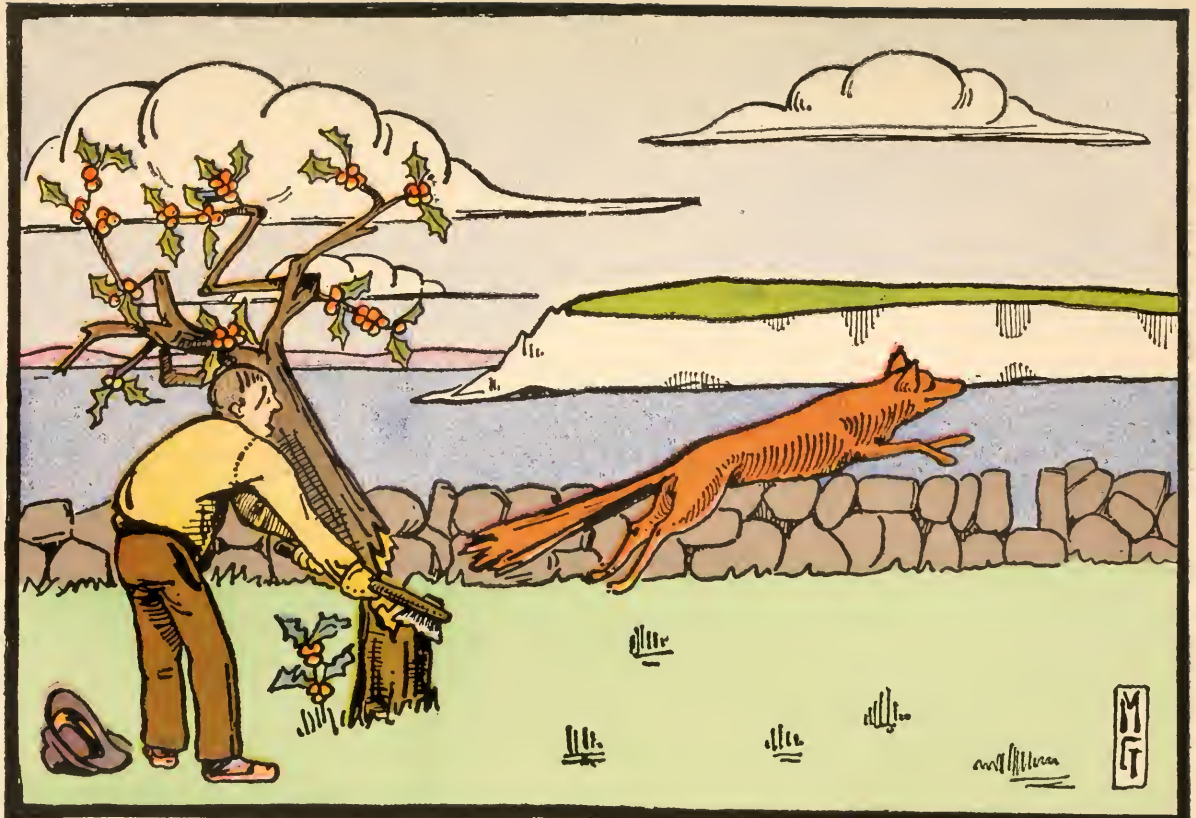
her, and he to give a call for her, or a whistle. He went on then till he came to the strand, and he sat down to eat the half of the cake he had left, and there came a hawk and asked a share of it, and he gave her a share. 'Can you give me any tidings of Croagcill and of where he is living?' says he to the hawk. 'I went as far as Croagcill once,' says the hawk; 'and I will give you a little canoe of a boat,' says she, 'will bring you to him. But it will be hard for you to kill him,' says she, 'for there is no one knows where his body is or where he has it hid. And call to me if I can give help to you,' says she, 'and any good anyone can do for you I'll do it.'

So he went in the boat, and it had charms in it, that it brought him as far as Croagcill's house. The King's daughter saw him coming, and she ran out to meet him. 'My thousand welcomes to you,' says she, 'for I thought I never would see one of Ireland's men again.' So he told her he had come to bring her back to her father in Munster. 'Oh, what can I do with

you now,' says she; 'for when Croagcill comes home he will kill you?'

She put him in hiding before evening in a box, and Croagcill came in, and having a heavy deer upon his shoulders. He drew it through the fire, and through the ashes, and through his long, cold teeth, and there was not one bit left but the bones. 'Fru, fra, feasog,' he says then; 'I feel the smell of a sweet-voiced liar of an Irishman in some place that is not far off.' 'My dear and my love, and my man that is better than his father,' says the King's daughter, 'it is that I myself was at the top of the house, and there came a little bird from Ireland and perched upon my hand.' 'Maybe so, maybe so,' says he. 'You to get your death,' says the King's daughter; 'what at all would I do being left in this strange house?' 'Och,' says he, 'I will never get my death; for there is no one knows where the life of my body is hid.' 'Oh, and where is it?' says the King's daughter. 'It is in the green plot that is outside the door,' says he.

He went out in the morning, and the King's daughter rose up and she took roses and posies and every sort that was pretty, and she put them out on the green plot. And she let the Fish's son come out for the daytime, and she put him back in the box at night. When Croagcill drew to the house in the evening there was a big beast upon his shoulders, and he drew it through the fire, and through the ashes, and through his long, cold teeth, and there was not a bit left on it. 'Fru, fra, feasog, I get the smell of the sweet-voiced, lying Irishman coming to my house to-night,' says he. 'My love and my secret, there is nothing at all but what is used to be in it,' says she. 'There is, and more,' says he. 'Oh, I was up at the top of the castle, and a little bird from Ireland came and perched on my head,' says she. 'Maybe so, maybe so,' says Croagcill. He went out then. 'What is the reason the green plot to be full of roses and posies?' says he. 'Didn't I hear you say,' says she, 'that is the place your life is?' 'Och,' says he, 'you to know



IT IS IN THAT FOX CROAGCILL'S LIFE WAS.

the place where my life is, it is likely you would have affection for it.' 'I would indeed be fond of it,' says she. 'Well,' says he, 'there is a green holly-bush beyond at the brink of the sea, and it is inside that tree my life is, and I will never get my death till the Fish's son from Ireland will come and will cut down that tree with his sword, and that is a thing will not happen for ever.'

In the morning Croagcill went out to the wood, and the Fish's son took his sword and began to cut the holly-tree. And when he had it near cut through, the red fox ran out from the roots, and it is in that fox Croagcill's life was. Then the Fish's son gave a call and a whistle, and the white hound from the wood came and followed after the fox, and they were going up and down and there and hither in every part, and at the last the hound got a grip of the fox. But with that it changed into a bird and went flying up high over the tide. 'Oh, where is now the grey hawk of the dark earth?' says the Fish's son. So the hawk

was there on the minute, and she made a dart at the bird in the air, and caught it in her claws and killed it that it dropped into the sea, and at that minute Croagcill dropped dead where he was, and there was an end of him.

They gathered all he had of riches, and they went back to the King of Munster's house. The King was very glad to see them coming home. 'You can take my daughter now,' says the King, 'and you can join and be married to one another.' So they married and wedded together, and there was a wedding feast for a year and a day for them, and it was as good the last day as at the first.

SHAWNEEN

THERE was a King one time was very much put out because he had no son, and he went at last to consult his Chief Adviser. And the Chief Adviser said: 'It is easy enough managed if you do as I tell you. Let you send some one,' says he, 'to such a place to catch a fish. And when the fish is brought in, give it to the Queen, your wife, to eat.'

So the King sent as he was bade, and the fish was caught and brought in, and he gave it to the cook, and bade her put it before the fire, but to be careful with it, and not to let any blob or blister rise on it. But it is impossible to cook a fish before the fire without the skin of it rising in some place or other, and so there came a blob on the skin, and the cook put her finger on it to smooth it down, and then she put her finger into her mouth to cool it, and so she got a taste of the fish. And then it was sent up to the Queen, and she

ate it, and what was left of it was thrown out into the yard, and there was a mare in the yard, and a greyhound, and they ate the bits that were thrown out.

And before a year was out the Queen had a young son, and the cook had a young son, and the mare had two foals, and the greyhound had two pups.

And the two young men were sent off for a while to some place to be cared, and when they came back they were so much like one another no person could say which was the Queen's son and which was the cook's. And the Queen was vexed at that, and she went to the Chief Adviser and said: 'Tell me some way that I can know which is my own son, for I don't like to be giving the same eating and drinking to the cook's son as to my own.' 'It is easy to know that,' said the Chief Adviser, 'if you will do as I tell you. Go you outside, and stand at the door they will be coming in by, and when they see you, your own son will bow his head, but the cook's son will only laugh.'

So she did that, and when her own son bowed his head

her servants put a mark on him, that she would know him again. And when they were all sitting at their dinner after that, she said to Shawneen, that was the cook's son: 'It is time for you to go away out of this, for you are not my son.' And her own son, that we will call Shamus, said: 'Do not send him away; are we not brothers?' But Shawneen said: 'I would have been long ago out of this house if I knew it was not my own father and mother owned it.' And for all Shamus could say to him, he would not stop. But before he went they were by the well that was in the garden, and he said to Shamus: 'If harm ever happens to me, that water on the top of the well will be blood, and the water below will be honey.'

Then he took one of the pups, and one of the two horses that was foaled after the mare eating the fish, and the wind that was after him could not catch him, and he caught the wind that was before him. And he went on till he came to a cooper's house, and he asked did he want a servant. 'Well,' says the cooper, 'I

have thirteen goats—twelve goats and a puck—and let you bring them out and be minding them to-morrow.' 'I will do that for you,' says Shawneen. So the cooper engaged him, and on the morrow he brought out the goats to the place he was bade, that was the top of a mountain. And there was a gentleman's demesne, and walls about it, and he looked in at the gate and he saw grass growing up as high as the trees. 'Why wouldn't my poor goats go in there,' says he, 'and be grazing in it, and not to be out on that red mountain where there is not a rib of grass, and what they are eating is clay?' So he drove in the goats through the gate, and they were eating the grass, and he heard some person coming, and he went up in a tree. He saw a giant coming into the field. The giant looked at him. 'I see where you are in the tree,' says he. 'And I think you too big for one mouthful,' says he; 'and I think you too small for two mouthfuls, and I don't know what will I do with you unless I will grind you up and make snuff for my nose.' 'As you are strong



A GENTLEMAN'S DEMESNE AND WALLS ABOUT IT.

be merciful,' says Shawneen up in the tree. 'Come down out of that, you little dwarf,' says the giant, 'or I'll tear you and the tree asunder.' So Shawneen came down. 'Would you sooner be driving red-hot knives into one another's hearts,' says the giant, 'or would you sooner be fighting one another on red-hot flags?' 'Fighting on red-hot flags is what I'm used to at home,' says Shawneen; 'and your dirty feet will be sinking in them and my feet will be rising.' So then they began the fight. The ground that was hard they made soft, and the ground that was soft they made hard, and they made spring-wells come up through the green flags. They were like that all through the day, no one getting the upper hand of the other; and at last a little bird came and sat on the bush and said to Shawneen: 'If you won't make an end of him by sunset, he'll make an end of you.' Then Shawneen put out his strength, and he brought the giant down on his knees. 'Give me my life,' says the giant, 'and I'll give you the best gift I have.' 'What gift

is that?' says Shawneen. 'A Sword that nothing can stand against,' says the giant. 'Where is it to be found?' says Shawneen. 'In that red door you see there in the hill.' So Shawneen went and got it out. 'Where will I try the Sword?' says he. 'Try it on that ugly black stump of a tree,' says the giant. 'I see nothing blacker or uglier than your own head,' says Shawneen. And with that he made one stroke, and cut off the giant's head that it went into the air, and he caught it on the Sword as it was coming down, and made two halves of it. 'It is well for you I did not join to the body again,' says the head, 'or you would never have been able to strike it off again.' 'I did not give you the chance of that,' says Shawneen. And he brought away the great Sword with him.

So he brought the goats home at evening, and everybody wondered at all the milk they gave that night. And when the cooper was eating his supper he said: 'I think I only hear two roars from beyond to-night, in place of three.'

The next morning Shawneen went out again with the goats, and he saw another demesne with good grass in it, and he brought in the goats. All happened the same as the first day, but the giant that came this time had two heads, and they fought together, and the little bird came and spoke to Shawneen as before. And when the giant was brought down by Shawneen he said: 'Give me my life and I will give you the best thing I have.' 'What thing is that?' says Shawneen. 'It is a Cloak of Darkness you can put on, and you will see everyone but no one can see you.' 'Where is it?' says Shawneen. 'It's inside that little red door at the side of the hill.' So Shawneen went and brought out the Cloak. And then he cut off the giant's two heads, and caught them coming down, and made four halves of them. And they said it was well for him he had not given them time to join the body.

That night when the goats came home all the vessels that could be found were filled up with milk.

The next morning Shawneen went out again, and

all happened as before, and the giant this time had four heads, and Shawneen made eight halves of them. And the giant told him to go to a little blue door in the side of the hill, and there he got a pair of Shoes of Swiftness, that when you put them on would make you run faster than the wind.

That night the goats gave so much milk there was no place to hold it. 'Oh, what can we do for vessels to hold the milk?' says the cooper, and they were milking the poor goats on the ground, and it was given to poor people and men passing the road. I was passing that way myself, and I got a drink of it. 'Why is it,' says the cooper, 'the goats are giving so much milk these days? Are you bringing them to any other grass?' 'I am not,' says Shawneen, 'but I have a good stick, and whenever they would stop still or lie down I give them blows of it, that they jump over walls and stones and ditches; that's the way to make them give plenty of milk.' And that night at supper the cooper said: 'I hear no roars at all.'

The next day Shawneen brought the goats to the first meadow he went to, and there came before him the mother of the three giants, that was the strongest of them all. 'Was it you killed my three sons?' says she. 'It was,' says Shawneen. 'I thought,' says she, 'the man wasn't born in Ireland that could do that much.' So they took a hold of one another and went wrestling, and neither of them got the better of the other through the length of the day. And it is the way it was, the two farthest back teeth in the mother's mouth were crutches to her, that reached down to the ground, the way Shawneen would not get a good grip of her at one side or the other. And at the fall of day the little bird came and sat on the bush and said: 'Why wouldn't you give a tip to the crutch?' So with that he gave a tip of his boot to the tooth, that knocked it out of her head, and the mother fell, and before she died she gave him up her estate.

Shawneen left the cooper's house then, and he went on till he came to a large garden, and he went up in

the branches of a cherry-tree, and he was eating the cherries and throwing the stones down. There came in a young lady, and she looked up and she saw him in the tree. 'Oh, you are an unruly lad,' says she, 'for that tree belongs to the King that is my father, and what right have you to go plundering it down?' So he came down then out of the tree, and he asked what could he do for her. 'Go out and bring me news,' says she, 'is the Black Duke coming to make a good fight against the Fiery Dragon.' The Fiery Dragon now was a fish that used to come every seven years, and he should get the primest lady in the land to eat and to banish. And it was the King's daughter was to be given to him on that very day, unless the Black Duke or some other champion would get the better of him. And it was given out that whatever man would kill the Dragon would get the King's daughter for his wife.

So Shawneen went down by the road to the sea, and he came to a cluster of brambles and of bushes that was beside the road, and he looked in, and who was

hiding in it but the Black Duke. 'Why wouldn't you go fight?' says Shawneen; 'and thousands of people and carriages there looking on.' 'Oh, I am in dread,' says the Black Duke; for he was a great coward, and he was afeard to go on and to face the Fiery Dragon. 'Give me here your suit of armour,' says Shawneen. So he got the suit of armour and he went on to the brink of the sea, and it was like the Cliffs of Moher; all the people were looking down from it, and there on the strand the King's daughter was sitting and she crying, and tied in a silver chair. And she saw Shawneen coming, and he wearing the Black Duke's suit. 'Let me lie a while with my head on your knee,' says he, 'and you can waken me when the Dragon is coming.' So he did that, and she saw the Fiery Dragon coming, and its mouth open and a fiery flame from it, and nine miles of the sea was dry with all he drank of it. So she wakened Shawneen, and they had a great fight, and he got the better of the Fiery Dragon. 'Oh, let me go out of this for the night,'

says the Dragon, 'and I'll come back in the early morning out of the salt sea.' So Shawneen let him go, and as to himself, he put on the Shoes of Swiftness that no one would overtake him, and he went back to the cooper's house for the night.

Well, the next day he came again, and there was no news or tidings of the Black Duke, and all happened as before, and he drove back the Fiery Dragon till the next morning.

And the third day Shawneen came again, and he lay down to take a sleep while he was waiting, with his head in the lap of the King's daughter. And this time she thought some way he was maybe not the Black Duke, and she took her scissors and cut off a bunch of his hair. 'Are you cutting all the hair off my head?' says he. 'I am cutting it,' says she, 'till I'll know who was it made an end of the Fiery Dragon.' So she made a little packet of it and put it away, and, another thing, she drew off a golden shoe from his foot. And when she saw the Dragon coming she

awoke him, and he said: 'This time I will put the Dragon in a way he will eat no more King's daughters.' So he took out the Sword he had got from the giant, and he drove the Dragon to his knees out in the sea, and down to the hip, and gave him a blow that split him in two halves from the head to the tail, and there was an end of him. And he put on the Cloak of Darkness he had taken from the giant, that no one saw what way did he go, and away with him to the cooper's house.

Then the King made ready the wedding, and he sent for the Black Duke that was to marry his daughter, and he was made much of and was the right-hand man, and there was music and shouting before him, and the greatest wedding given out that ever was. But the King's daughter knew well it was not the Black Duke had saved her, and she took out the bunch of hair she had, and she said she would marry no one but the man whose hair would match that; and she showed the gold shoe and said she would marry no one but the

man whose foot would fit it. And the Black Duke tried to put on the shoe, but so much as his toe would not go into it; and as for his hair, it did not match at all to the bunch of hair she had cut from the man that saved her.

So then the King gave a great ball to bring all the chief men of the country together, to try would the shoe fit any of them. And they were all going to carpenters and joiners getting bits of their feet cut off to try could they wear the shoe, but it was no use; not one of them could get it on. Then the King went to his Chief Adviser and asked what could he do. And the Chief Adviser bade him to give another ball. 'And this time,' he said, 'give it to poor as well as rich.'

So the ball was given and many came flocking to it, but the shoe would not fit any one of them. And there were two Fools passing the way and they said: 'There is a wedding going on, the greatest that ever was in the world; and let us go in now,' they said, 'and we will be eating meat.' So they went in and sat by the kitchen

fire, and the King asked had everyone in the house or out of the house tried to see would the bunch of hair fit to their poll, and they said all unless the two Fools that were sitting by the kitchen fire. So they were brought up and bade to take their caps off, but the hair did not match their own. And the Chief Adviser said: 'Is everyone here belonging to the district?' 'They are all here,' said the King, 'unless the boy that minds the cooper's goats. And I would not like him to be coming up here,' he said. So Shawneen was sent for, and he was told what the King said, and that vexed him, where he knew the two Fools had got their chance. And he got his sword and came running up the stairs as if to strike off the King's head. But when he got to the top of the stairs the King's daughter saw him and she gave a cry and ran into his arms. And they tried the shoe and it fitted him, and his hair matched to the bunch that had been cut off. That was a good thought the King's daughter had to cut a bit of his hair; and there is nothing in the world so quick as a woman's

thought. A man's thought is quick enough, but a woman's thought is quicker again.

And Shawneen took the Black Duke and bound him with gads, that no one would be able to loosen but himself, and everyone was striving to loosen the gads, but they could not; and Shawneen was bade come and try his hand at them, but he said he would not till the Royal Family themselves would come asking him. So they came, and the gads loosened of themselves, and Shawneen and the King's daughter were married; and a great feast was given for three days and three nights, and there was every sort of fiddlers and of pipers at the wedding.

And at the end of that time, one morning there came a deer outside the window, with bells on it, and they ringing. And it called out: 'Here is the hunt; where are the huntsman and the hounds?' So when Shawneen heard that, he got up and took his horse and his hound and went hunting the deer. When it was in the hollow he was on the hill, and when it was on the hill

he was in the hollow; and that went on all through the day, and when night fell it went into a wood. And Shawneen went into the wood after it, and all he could see was a mud-wall cabin, and he went in, and there he saw an old woman, about two hundred years old, and she sitting over the fire. 'Did you see a deer pass this way?' says Shawneen. 'I did not,' says she. 'But it's too late for you to be following a deer; let you stop here the night.' 'What will I do with my horse and hound?' says Shawneen. 'Here are two ribs of hair,' says she, 'and let you tie them up with those ribs.' So Shawneen went out and tied up the horse and the hound, and when he came in again the old woman said: 'It was you killed my three grandsons,' she said, 'and I'm going to kill you now.' And she put on a pair of boxing gloves, each one of them nine stone weight, and the nails in them fifteen inches long. Then they began to fight, and Shawneen was getting the worst of it. 'Help, hound!' he cried out then. 'Squeeze, hair!' called out the old woman, and the rib of hair that was

around the hound's neek squeezed him to death. 'Help, horse!' cried Shawneen. 'Squeeze, hair!' screeched out the hag, and the rib of hair that was about the horse's neck began to tighten and to squeeze him to death. Then the old woman made an end of Shawneen, and threw him outside the door.

To go back now to Shamus. He was out in the garden one day, and he took a look at the well, and what did he see but that the water at the top was blood, and what was underneath was honey. So he went into the house again, and he said to his mother: 'I will never eat a second meal at the same table, or sleep a second night in the same bed, till I know what is happening to Shawneen.

So he took the other horse then and the hound, and he set off over hills where cock never crows and wind never blows, and the old boy himself never sounds his horn. And at last he came to the cooper's house, and when he came in the cooper said: 'You are welcome, and I can give you better treatment than I did the

last time you came in to me;' for he thought it was Shawneen was in it, they were so much like one another. 'That is good,' says Shamus to himself. 'My brother has been in this place.' And he gave the cooper the full of a basin of gold in the morning before he left the place.

Then he went on till he came to the King's house, and when he was at the door the King's daughter came running down the stairs. 'Oh, you are welcome back to me!' says she, for she thought it was Shawneen, her husband, was in it. And all the people said: 'It is a wonder you to have gone hunting three days after your marriage, and to stop so long away.'

Well, the next morning the deer came, and bells ringing on her, under the windows, and called out: 'The hunt is here; where are the huntsman and the hounds?' Then Shamus got up and took his horse and his hound, and followed her over hills and hollows till they came to the wood, and there he saw nothing but the mud-wall cabin, and the old woman sitting by the

fire, and she bade him stop the night there, and gave him two ribs of hair to tie up his horse and his hound. But Shamus was wittier than Shawneen, and before he went out he threw the ribs of hair into the fire secretly. When he came in the old woman said: 'Your brother killed my three grandsons, and I killed him, and I'll kill you along with him.' And she put her gloves on, and they began the fight, and then Shamus called out: 'Help, horse!' 'Squeeze, hair!' called out the hag. 'I can't squeeze; I'm in the fire,' says the hair. And the horse came in and gave her a blow of the hoof. 'Help, hound!' says Shamus then. 'Squeeze, hair!' says the hag. 'I can't; I'm in the fire,' says the second hair. Then the hound put his teeth in her, and Shamus brought her down, and she cried for mercy. 'Give me my life,' says she, 'and I'll tell you where you'll get your brother again, and his hound and his horse.' 'Where is that?' says Shamus. 'Do you see that rod over the fire?' says she. 'Let you take it down and go outside the door, where you will see three green stones,

and strike them with the rod, for they are your brother and his horse and his hound, and they will come to life again.' 'I will do that, but I will make a green stone of yourself first,' says Shamus; and he cut off her head with his sword. Then he went out and struck the stones, and sure enough there was Shawneen and his horse and hound, alive and well. And they began striking other stones that were there, and the rod rose the charm from them, and men came out that had been turned to stones, hundreds and thousands of them.

Then they went home, and Shawneen and his wife lived happy ever after, and they had children by the basketful, and threw them out by the shovelful. I was passing one time myself, and they called me in and gave me a cup of tea.

THE MAN THAT SERVED THE SEA

I WILL tell you a story about a man that served the sea. It came to him first in a dream to do that, and he was for seven years serving it, going down by the sea every day. And at the last he saw a mermaid in the water, and she combing her head, and he made a grab at her and brought her to the house. And he took the cover off of her, that was the same as a tail, and she was the most beautiful young lady that ever was seen, and he married her. But he hid the cover up in the roof of the house, the way she would not see it, and think of the sea.

She was with him for seven years, and by the will of God they had three sons, and through all that time she never spoke a word, but she laughed three times. The first time she laughed was one day the dinner was on the fire in the pot, and a man that came in was

sitting by the hearth, and they asked him would he eat a share of the victuals, and he gave a curse and he said: 'Sorra bit will I eat.' She gave a laugh when she heard that. The second time she laughed was one day the pot was on the fire and the dinner was boiling, and the husband's mother that was minding it did not take the top off. For it is the custom with our people to take the top off what is in the pot, and to throw it in behind the fire.

And the third time she laughed was one day the husband's mother was going into the parlour, and was knocked going in at the door.

Well, at the end of the seven years the cover fell down from the top of the house, and she got a little sketch of it, and she took it and tried it on. And with that she went out of the house into the sea, and brought the three sons along with her, and came back to the house no more.

And the man was going every day to the sea looking for her, and at the last, at the end of nine years, he got

a sketch of her where she was sitting on a rock, and he made a grab at her. But she said: 'You have no chance of getting me at all, or of bringing me back to the house. But I'll do this for you,' she said; 'the eldest son I had, I'll give him back to you if you will promise to leave him all that you have. But as for myself, you will never see me again,' she said. 'Is it any harm to ask you,' says the husband, 'what was it made you laugh the first time in the house?' 'I will tell you that,' says she. 'I laughed to hear that man make the curse, for when he did, all that was in the pot went to nothing.' 'And is it any harm to ask you why you laughed the second and the third time?' says the husband. 'The second time I laughed,' says she, 'was when your mother didn't take the top off the pot. For all that was in it turned to poison then,' says she, 'and I took no taste of it myself. And the third time I laughed,' she said, 'was when your mother was knocked going in at the parlour door. For I saw what it was knocked her,' she said. 'It was the leg of

a pot that was standing up out of the floor, and that was full of gold. And go home now,' she said, 'and dig under the threshold of the door, and you will find the pot of gold, and you can keep all that is in it.'

So the man did that, and he brought his eldest son with him, and he dug under the floor and found the pot of gold, and they were very rich from that time.

That is all, my lady, I know about it; and that is one of the old stories of Ireland.

THE BULLOCKEEN

THERE was a King, and it is a good while ago he was in it, and he married a King's daughter, and at the end of two years they had a son, and the mother died. And before dying she made a will, and she willed to the son but one thing only—a little black Bullockeen was out in the meadow. And she laid ocmmands on the King: 'Do not marry another woman,' she said, 'till the son I have left with you will give you leave three times to do it.'

And the son grew to be about seven years old, and he bought a hurling stick and a silver ball, and he used to go hurling. And one day he was putting the ball, and when he'd give it a blow that sent it over, he would be over before it would fall, and when he would strike it hither, he'd be hither before it, he was that smart, that it would not fall to the ground. The King was passing that way, and when he saw him he said: 'It's

a pity your mother not to see you,' says he, 'for it is proud out of you she would be this day.' 'Let you leave talking of my mother and let you take another woman,' says the son.

Well, the next day he was out with the ball again, and he was twice smarter that day, and to throw the ball over, he would be over before it, and to hit it back hither, he would be hither before it, the way it didn't touch the ground at all through that day. The King was looking at him. 'It's a pity your mother not to be here and to see you,' says he. 'It is time for you to put another woman's skin on my mother,' says the son. And the same thing happened on the third day.

So he married another King's daughter, and the King's son had a step-mother, and a bad step-mother she was. She had three daughters, and she used to be starving the King's son, and not to be giving him nourishment; but he had nothing but hardship, and all she would give him to eat was stirabout, and she used to be giving all to the daughters.

He was out in the field one day, and the little black Bullockeen came to him and it said: 'I know the way you are treated,' it said, 'and the sort of nourishment they are giving you. And unscrew now my left horn,' it said, 'and take what you will find out of it.' So he unscrewed the left horn, and the first thing he took out was a napkin, and he spread it out on the grass; and then he took out cups and plates and every sort of food, and he sat down and ate and drank his enough. And then he put back the napkin and all into the horn again, and screwed it on.

That was going on every day, and he used to be throwing his stirabout away into the ash-bin; and the servants found it, and they told the Queen that he was throwing away what they gave him, and getting fat all the same. And the Queen did not know what to do, and she would give the whole world to get quit of him, he being so smart; but she could get no way to do it.

So she sent for an old prophecy—a woman that did

foretellings—and she asked her what way would she get quit of the step-son. 'It's what is keeping him so smart,' says the prophecy-woman, 'is the little Bullockeen out in the meadow. And let you keep a watch on him,' says she, 'and you'll know it's truth I'm telling.' So the Queen says: 'I have three daughters,' says she, 'and I'll send them to watch him,' says she, 'for the one is as sharp as an earwig, and the other is sharper again, and the third has one eye in the back of her poll that can see through every enchantment.' So the first of the girls went out, but before she went the little Bullockeen says to the son: 'Your step-sister will be coming to-day to watch you,' says he, 'and unscrew now my right horn, and take out a pin of slumber you will find under it, and when you see her coming go and play with her for a while, and put the pin of slumber into her ear and she will fall asleep.' So he did as the Bullockeen told him, and he put the pin of slumber into the step-sister's ear, and she fell into a deep sleep in the grass and never woke till evening.

The next day the second of the girls went out to keep watch, where the son and the Bullockeen were eating their dinner together. But the Bullockeen rose a fog and an enchantment around them, that she could see nothing, and so she went home to her mother,

The third day the third of the daughters went out, and the son took the pin of slumber as before, and put it in her ear, and she fell asleep. But if the two front eyes were shut, the eye at the back of the poll was open. Then the Bullockeen put the fog and the enchantment around her; but if he did, the eye at the back of her poll was able to see through every enchantment, and she went back and she told the mother that the step-brother got all he could use out of the Bullockeen's horn, and that he got out of it the best dinner was in the world.

So the Queen sent again for the old prophecy, and she came, and the Queen asked her what way could she bring the King to do away with the Bullockeen. 'For he will not do it for my asking,' says she.

'Let you let on to be sick,' says the hag, 'and stop in your bed,' says she, 'and send for the King, and tell him there is nothing will cure you but the liver of the Bullockeen,' says she.

So the Queen stopped in her bed and let on to be sick, and she sent for the King, and she said there was nothing could cure her but to kill the Bullockeen and to give her his liver. 'I cannot do that,' says the King; 'for when that boy's mother was dying,' says he, 'she made a will,' says he, 'and she willed him nothing but the little Bullockeen in the meadow. But ask me any other thing,' says he, 'and I will give it.'

So the Queen sent for the hag and told her that. 'Let you take a little black cock is without,' says the hag, 'and let them kill it and take the puddings out of him,' says she, 'and fill it with blood, and let you put that in your mouth and squeeze it the time the King will come in, and tell him it is the heart's blood is running from you for the want of the liver of the Bullockeen,' says she.

So the Queen did as she bade her, and they killed the cock and filled the pudding with blood, and the Queen put it in her mouth where she was in bed. 'Oh, go run out for the King,' says she, 'for I am near my death.' So the King came running in. 'Oh,' says she, 'I am near my death!' says she, and she squeezes the blood out of her mouth, and the King thought it was her heart's blood was coming from her. 'It will not stop,' says she, 'till I'll get the liver of the little Bullockeen; and let you kill him now for me,' says she. 'I cannot do that,' says the King; and he made her the same answer as before and went out of the room.

So the Queen sent again for the old prophecy and told her all. 'Haven't you a yard out there,' says she, 'and a wall around it,' says she, 'is that high a bird can hardly fly over it,' says she. 'And let you drive the Bullockeen in there,' says she, 'and put your champions around to kill it.' So that was done, but when the Bullockeen saw all the champions making an attack on him, he rose up in the air, and the Queen was leaning

out through the window, and he took her on his horns, and whitewashed the wall with her bones.

He called to the boy then, and the boy put a halter on him, and they rode away together where the winds never blew, and the cocks never crew, and the old boy himself never sounded his horn. And they overtook the wind that was before them, and the wind that was after them couldn't overtake them.

They came then to a great wood, and the Black Bullockeen says to the boy: 'Get up now into the highest tree you can find, and stop there through the day, for I have to fight with the Red Bull that is coming against me. And unscrew my right horn,' says he, 'and take out the little bottle that is in it,' says he, 'and keep it with you; and if I am well at the end of the day,' says he, 'it will be as white as snow.'

The Red Bull came to meet him then, and his head was as big as another's body would be; and he and the little Bullockeen went to fight together and the boy stopped up in the tree. And in the evening he looked

at the little bottle, and what was in it was as white as before. So he came down, and he found the Bullockeen, and got up on his back again, and they went off the same as before.

They came then to the wood where the White Bull was, and he came out to fight the Bullockeen, and all happened the same as the first day. And the boy came down from his tree and got on his back again, and they went on to another wood. And the Green Bull came to meet him this time, and the boy went up in a tree. And at evening he looked at the little bottle and it was red up to the cork. He got down then and went to look for the Bullockeen, and he found him lying on the ground at the point of death.

And the Green Bull made a great bellow, and made away and left him there. And the Bullockeen said: 'I am going to leave you now,' says he, 'but I won't go without leaving you something. And when I am dead,' says he, 'cut three strips of skin off of me, from the nape of the neck to the root of the tail, and put them



THE BLACK BULLOCKEEN DIES.

about your body. And you to be wearing those,' says he, 'they'll give you the strength of six hundred men.'

So the boy sat down on the ground and cried him through three days and three nights. And after that he cut off as be was bade the three strips of the skin, and put them around his body, and they gave him the strength of six hundred men.

That now is the story of the Bullockeen, and it is a story that happened in the long ago.

THE THREE SONS

I'LL tell you a story, says the old man who was bringing fish from the sea; and after that I'll be going on to Ballinrobe, to one that has a shop there and that was reared by my grandmother. It is likely he'll give me a tasty suit of clothes. Working all my life I am; working with the flail in the barn, working with the spade at the potato tilling and the potato digging, breaking stones on the road. And four years ago the wife died, and its lonesome to be housekeeping alone.

There was a King long ago of Ireland, and he had three sons, and one of them was something silly. There came a sickness on the King, and he called his three sons, and he said to them that he had knowledge the only thing would cure him was the apples from Burnett's orchard, and he bade them to go look for them, for that orchard was in some far-away place, and no one could tell where it was.

The three sons went then, and they tackled their horses, and put on their bridles, and they set out, and went on till they came to three cross-roads. There they stopped, and they settled among themselves that each one of them would take one of the roads and go searching for the apples, and they would meet at the same place at the end of a year and a day.

The youngest son, that was a bit silly, took the crossest of the roads, and he went on till he came to a cottage by the roadside. He went in, and there was a withered old man in the house, and he said: 'There is a great welcome before the King of Ireland's son!' The son was astonished at that, because he thought no one could know him. He got good treatment there, and in the course of the night he asked the old man did he know where was Burnett's garden. 'I have a hundred years on me,' said the old man, 'and I never heard of such a place. But I have a brother,' he said, 'that has a hundred years more than myself, and it may be he would know,' he said.

So in the morning he gave a canoe to the King's son, and it went on of itself without him turning or guiding it, till it brought him to the old man's brother, and he got a welcome there and good treatment ; and in the course of the night he asked that old man did he know where was Burnett's orchard. 'I do not,' said he ; 'though I have two hundred years upon me I never heard of it. But go on,' he said, 'to a brother I have that has a hundred years more than myself.'

So in the morning he went into the canoe, and it went on of itself till it came to where the third old man was, that was older again than the other two, and the King's son asked did he know where was Burnett's garden. 'I do not,' he said, 'although I have three hundred years upon me ; but I will tell you how you will know it,' he said. 'Go on till you come to shore, where you will see a swan-gander standing by the water, and he is the one that can tell you and can bring you to it,' he said. 'And ask him to bring you to that garden in the name of the Almighty God.'

So the King's son went on in the canoe till he came where the swan-gander was standing on the shore. 'Can you tell me,' says he, 'where can I get the apples that are in Burnett's orchard? And can you bring me there?' he said.

'Indeed,' said the swan-gander, 'I am in no way obliged to your leader, or to whoever it was sent you to me and gave you that teaching, And those apples are well minded,' he said, 'by wolves; and the only time they ever sleep is for three hours once in every seven years. And it chances they are asleep for those three hours at this time; and so I will bring you there,' he said.

With that he stretched out his wings, and he bade the King's son to get up on his back. And it was long before he could start flying with the weight that was on him; but he flew away at last, and he brought the King's son to Burnett's garden, and there was a high wall around it, but he flew over the wall, and put him down in the garden. The King's son filled his bag

with the apples, and when he had done that, he went looking around, and he came to a large cottage in the garden, and he went in, and there was no one in the house but a beautiful young girl, and she asleep. So he went away ; but he brought with him the gold rings and the gold garters that he saw there in the window.

He got up again on the back of the swan-gander, but it was hard for it to rise with the weight of the bag of apples. But it did rise at last, and it brought him to where the old man was that had three hundred years. And the King's son gave one of the apples to the old man, and no sooner did he eat it than his age was gone from him, and he was like a boy of fifteen years.

He went on then to the two other old men, and gave an apple to both of them, and no sooner did they eat it than they were like young boys again.

Then the King's son went back to the cross-roads, for it was the end of a year and a day, and he was the first to come there, and he fell asleep. And the two

brothers came, and they saw him there, and they stole the bag of apples from under his head, and they put in the place of it a bag of apples that were no use at all. Then they went on to their father's house, and they gave him the apples they had stolen, and he was cured on the moment; but they told him that what the youngest son was bringing to him was poison apples, that would bring him to his death.

So the King was very angry when he heard that, and he went to his butler and he said: 'Go out to the wood where my son is, and shoot him there, and cut him open and bring his heart here with you on the top of the gun, and throw it to the dogs at the door; for I will never have him, or anything belonging to him, brought into this house,' he said.

So the butler got the gun, and went out to the wood, and when he saw the young man he was going to shoot him. 'Why would you do that?' said he. So the butler told him all the father ordered him; and the young man said then: 'Do not shoot me, but save me.

And it is what you will do,' he said. 'Go into the wood till you meet with a woodcock, and shoot it, and take the heart out of it, for that is most like the heart of a man. And bring the woodcock's heart to my father's house,' he said, 'and throw it there to the dogs at the door.'

So the butler did that, and spared him, and took its heart and threw it to the dogs at the door.

It was a good while after that, the beautiful young lady came to the King's doorway in a coach and four, and she stopped at the door. 'Send out my husband to me here,' she said. So the eldest son came out to her. 'Was it you came to the garden for the apples?' says she. 'It was,' says he. 'What things did you take notice of in the cottage where I was?' says she.

So he began telling of this thing and that thing that never was in it at all. And when she heard that she gave him a clout that knocked his head as solid as any stone in the wall.

Then the second son came out, and she asked him

the same question, and he told the same lies, and she gave him another clout that left his head as solid as any stone in the wall.

When the King heard all that, he knew they had deceived him, and that it was the youngest son had got the apples for his cure, and he began to cry after him and to lament that he was not living to come back again. 'Would you like to know he is living yet?' says the butler. 'I would sooner hear it than any word that ever I heard,' says the King. 'Well, he is living yet, and is in the wood,' says the butler.

When the young lady heard that, she bade the butler to bring her where he was, and they went together to the wood, and there they found him where he had been living on the fruits of the trees through the most of the year. So when the young lady saw him, she said: 'Was it you came to the house where I was in the garden?' 'It was,' says he. 'What things did you take notice of in it?' 'Here they are,' says he. And he put his hand in his pocket, and brought out the gold rings and

the golden garters and the other signs he had brought away.

So she knew then he was the right one that was there, and she married him, and they lived happy ever after, and there was great rejoicing in the King of Ireland's house.

KING SOLOMON

I'LL tell you a story now, and I'll not be with you again till Christmas; and I never saw a man that could read an open book, was able to tell a story out of the mouth.

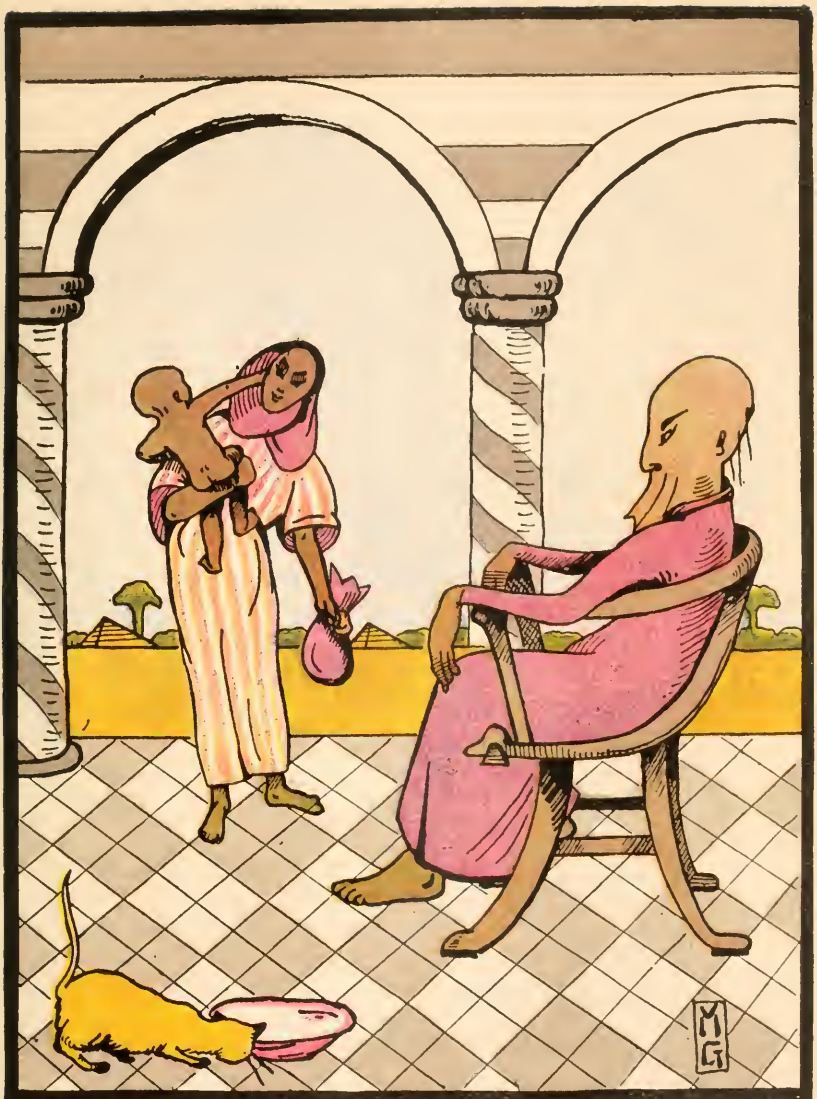
King Solomon made a great house for himself, the best that was ever seen. And there was a man passing one day, and he stopped to give a look at it—the way I might give a look at that house there. 'Tell me what there is stronger and finer than that house,' says King Solomon. 'I don't know anything that is stronger and finer than it is,' says the man. 'Well,' said King Solomon, 'unless you can give me an answer to that by to-morrow I'll have the head struck off of you,' he said.

So when the man went home, he told all that to the daughter he had, and he said he could find no answer. 'I will give you an answer,' says she. 'Is not God

stronger than that house, and isn't heaven finer than what it is?' So he went the next day and he gave that answer. 'I'll give you another question,' says the King then. 'Tell me,' says he, 'what is the number of the stars of the sky! And tell me that by to-morrow,' says he, 'or I will strike the head off you.'

So the man went home, and he could think of no answer, and he told the daughter what happened, and how King Solomon asked him to give an account of the stars in the sky. 'I will give you an answer,' says the daughter. 'If you were to put twelve candles lighting on the top of the highest mountain,' says she, 'and to be looking at them, and your sight to spread on you, you wouldn't know how many you were looking at, but you might think it was hundreds. And there is no one can tell the number of the stars,' says she, 'or give an account of them, but God that made them.'

So the man went back next day, and he gave that answer to King Solomon. 'Where did you get that answer,' says the king, 'or who made it?' says he.



THE THIRD THING I'LL BE TAKING IS YOURSELF.

'It was my daughter made it,' says the man. 'Bring her here till I'll have a look at her,' says the king.

So the daughter was brought before him, and she was a fine comely girl, and when King Solomon saw her he took a liking to her. 'Will you marry me?' says he. 'I will not,' says she; 'for if you marry me to-day, you might throw me off again to-morrow.' I suppose she said that because she knew of him having seven hundred wives. 'I will not do that,' says he. 'Well,' says she, 'I'll make a bargain with you that I'll marry you if you give me your word that the day you turn me out you'll let me carry away with me the three things I'll ask for, and to have them for my own.'

So King Solomon agreed to that, and she married him, and she had a child. And after a while he tired of her, and said she might go home. 'I will go,' says she, 'but I'll bring away the three things you offered to give me.' So the first thing she brought away was the child, and the second thing was a bag of gold. She

came then to King Solomon. 'Now,' says she, 'since you said I could bring away three things, it is you yourself is the third. And come with me now,' she says. So when King Solomon heard that, he was afraid she would bring him with her, and that she would have power over him. So he asked her to stop with him, and so she did.

He began well and he ended badly; and Samson did the same, killing a lion that was going to eat him in the beginning, and killing himself in the end. It was through a woman that he lost his eyesight.

THE ROBINEEN

I HAVE a new wife now, says the old man who had come back from Ballinrobe; to keep my victuals ready and the door open before me. She's a quiet woman at some times, but she has a queer way in her mind at the time of the full moon, but it will pass away after. And here is a story now, and I'll word it easy to you.

There was a woman one time and she had three sons. Well, one day one of them said the quarter was too small for the three of them to be in it. 'And I'll go,' says he, 'and I'll try to do for myself. And let you turn and make a cake for me to bring with me,' says he to the mother.

The mother went at night and she baked two cakes, a big one and a small one. And when he was going to start in the morning: 'Which would you sooner have now,' says she, 'to have the big one and my curse, or the small one and my blessing?' 'I'll take the big one

and your curse,' says he; 'the other one is too small and the road being long before me.'

Well, he tripped on till he got hungry, and sat down on the brink of a lake, and he spread out a cloth for the dinner the way he would lose none of the crumbs, and he broke up a piece of the cake then and commenced eating it. The Robineen Redbreast was coming around him and he was hooshing him away. 'Every crumb that will fall,' says the Robineen, 'it will be for me.' 'Every crumb that will fall,' says he, 'it is little enough for myself.' So he hooshed away the Robineen.

When he had part of it ate, then he got dry, and he went to the lake to take a drink; and the Robineen walked to the lake before him and commenced washing herself and shaking out her wings in the lake, and she turned it all into blood instead of water. He took a drink of it, and he fell dead after taking the drink. The Robineen got people to bury him under a big stone was in it; for the Robineen was enchanted, and they say the birds of the air had talk at that time.

The two brothers then were sitting by the hearth, the same as himself, till the end of seven years. 'It is this day seven years,' says the second one, 'that the brother went out from this. And I'll go make a poke for him. And it's as good for you,' says he to the mother, 'go bake a cake for the road in the morning.'

Well, the mother did the same thing as before, and she made a big cake and a small cake, and asked him would he have the small one with her blessing, or the big one with her curse. 'I'll have the big one with your curse,' says he. So he set out, and when he came to the same place he sat down on the same stone where the brother had sat, and he spread a cloth the way any crumb that would fall, he could pick it up for himself. The Robineen came around him asking for the crumbs, and he wouldn't give them and he hooshed her away. So when he was going to the lake for a drink, she went into it before him, and spread out her wings and scattered the water, and after he took one drink of it he

fell dead; and she buried the two of them under one stone, the Robineen did, the two brothers.

Well, they were fourteen years gone when the third man said he would go look for them, and the mother made two cakes the same as she made for the other two. Well, the mother told him then to take the big one or the small one; to take the big one with her curse, or to take the small one with her blessing. 'There's nothing like a mother's blessing,' says he. 'And I'll take the small one with your blessing,' he said.

It happened that he was walking till he went in the same place where the brothers were killed, and commenced eating the cake. The Robineen was coming anear him, and there wasn't a bite he would take but he would give a second bite to the Robineen. She didn't stir up the lake, but let him take his full drink, and she made a well in the lake and made wine in it and gave enough of it to him to drink. 'Here is a little bush,' she says then, 'an enchanted bush; and give a tip to that stone there,

and you can rise your two brothers.' So, thanks be to God, he struck the two tips on the stone, and they rose as well as ever and as fresh. Says the Robineen: 'They may be thankful to you, they would never stir out of that only for you coming.'

She gave this young fellow a bag of gold for himself and his two brothers, a fine three men. They never met with the Robineen from that out. The mother's blessing is better with a small cake than her curse with a big one.

After the three brothers went home, they lived together in the house. And the Robineen had told the youngest brother to go where there was a holly-bush in the garden and to root around it. So they went out and rooted around it, and what they found was a crock of gold, and they brought it away with them. There was a little flag, now, in the top of the crock, and the flag was left aside on the grass. It happened there came after a while a poor scholar walking the road, and he took notice of the little slab, and that there was writing

on it. And he was able to read the writing, and it is what it said: 'The other side is as lucky as this side.' So he showed that to the brothers, and they went rooting the other side, and what did they find but two more crocks of gold, the way there was one apiece for them. So there were no richer farmers in the country than those three brothers, and they got gold and divided it and scattered it.

And that is a nice story and a wonderful story, and a true thing that fell out. And Lofarey, the man that told it to me, said it was a true story, and that his own father told him he was speaking to the poor scholar that read the flag.

THE BALL OF THREAD

THERE was a young lady one time, and a young boy came to her to ask her to marry him. He gave her a pound ball of thread, and bade her to leave it on the ground, and to take the end of the thread in her hand, and when the end of it would be run out, to stamp her foot on the ground and she would come to him.

So she bought a shilling's worth of bread and a shilling's worth of apples, and she took the ball of thread as he told her. And when she stamped her foot a door opened in the ground before her, and she went in, and all she saw in the room was a dog and a cat.

So she divided the bread and the apples between them, and she gave them halves, and they were more than proud to eat that much of Ireland's bread, which they didn't get the taste of for two hundred years before.

They showed her then a store of a room where there were fifty of her sort that were after being beheaded, and gold rings on their hands. For the man was an enchanted man, and he had brought them away the same as he did herself. The cat and the dog said as she proved so well, they would hide her before she'd be in danger, for she accommodated them so well with everything. They rose up the flag that was in the fireplace, and they hid her there under it, and when the man came in the man asked did such a one come in, and they said, 'No.'

When he went to rest himself they opened the door and let her out, and he awoke and told the cat to ask who came in at the door. The cat made him an answer, she said: 'No one but the dog, that struck against it.'

So the young lady went home, and after a while he came to her again the same way, and he said he would bring her away with him. So when he was coming she invited a great quality dinner, and before he

came there she told them all that had happened, and asked what should be done to him. Then some said he should be hung. But a big lord that was there said to do nothing at all to him, only to put him into a barrel of pitch and tar and to burn him altogether. But when they thought to do that and to take him they hadn't but his shadow, and he flew away out through the top of the house, and they hadn't a trace of him, and he had brought away the young lady along with him.

Her three brothers went looking for her then with the pound ball of thread he had left. And when they stamped their foot the door opened before them, but there was no one in the house but the cat. They told him their sister was gone, and they were in dread she was killed. But he said: 'She is not killed, and she is here hid where she was before.' So they took up the flag of the hearth, and there she was safe and well, and having four gold rings on her hands that belonged to four of her first cousins that were beheaded in the

room. The cat told them to go home, and they would meet the man easy enough. So after a while he came looking for the young lady again, and he had changed his clothes, but if he had they knew him. But the first time they fired a shot at him it did him no harm, he being but a shadow. But whatever they did, or whatever shot they put in their gun or their revolver, they shot him dead after that, and there was no more about him.

THE HORSE AND FOAL

THERE were very haunted people in the old times in Ireland, used to be bewitching one another. A living class of people they were, but it was by magic they did it.

There was a man going to the north from Mayo to sell a horse, and he was riding the horse, and the foal after them. And over beyond the wall he saw a hare running, and two black hounds hunting it. And when they came to him, the hare made a leap into his arms, and he drove away the hounds, and put it down again safe among the rocks. He went on then to the north for to sell the horse, but if he did, in the night it was stole from him.

So he went back to Mayo to see would he find it, and he was walking through the day, and when the night came he met with a house, and he went into it like any countryman might, to ask would he get a

clean lodging. And there was in the house a very nice-looking young woman, and he asked could he get a lodging. 'And why wouldn't you get it?' says she. 'And more than that,' she says, 'I'll call in the husband, and he'll go find the horse you have lost and the foal. And you don't know me,' she says; 'but I am the woman you saved, and that had been turned into a hare, and for sixteen years I was away in that shape.'

So she did what she promised, and he was deserving of it; for wouldn't another man have kept the hare when he got it, but something stuck in him that he didn't. And wasn't it a terrible thing in those times that women could be turned into hares? And it was only a black hound could come up with them.

THE WOMAN THAT WAS A GREAT FOOL

THERE was a woman was a great fool. She had meal to sift one day, and the hens were bothering her, coming in over the door. And it was outside in the field she went sifting it, that it was brought away with a blast of wind that rose, till there wasn't one grain left on the top of another, but it was brought away with the wind into the fields and over the grass. And when the husband came back in the evening he asked where was it, and it was all spent. 'Sure you have money in the bag to buy more,' says she. 'I have not,' says he; 'for what is in the bag I have to keep for the Grey Scrape of the Spring.'

Well, the next day an old beggarman came asking for money, and when the woman looked at him and saw that he was grey: 'That should be the Grey Scrape

of the Spring,' she said. And she gave him all the money was in the bag.

When the husband heard that, he didn't say much, for he was a quiet man. But he went and he killed the cow that was all he had left, and he cut it up and put it in a barrel, and salt on it. 'That will be enough to grease the cabbage anyway,' says he.

So the next day the wife brought out every bit of the beef, and she put a bit of it on the top of every head of cabbage was in the garden. Well, when the night came and they were in bed, there came a thousand dogs fighting for the meat was in the garden, and barking, and calling, and roaring. And when the husband went out they had it brought away, and all the cabbage destroyed and broken.

So he said then it was as good for them to go wandering, and he went out of the house, and the woman following him. 'Let you draw the door after you,' says he—that is, that she should close it. But what she did was to rise it off the hinges, and to draw

it after her along the road till they came to a wood. And they went up into the branches of a tree to pass the night, and she bringing the board with her.

It happened there came some robbers under the tree, dividing a great deal of gold and silver they were after robbing from a castle. And when the man and the woman saw that, they dropped the door down on them with a great noise, and the robbers were affrighted and ran away, leaving all they had robbed after them. And the man and the woman got it for themselves, and they were rich from that day.

THE DANES

I WILL tell you about the Danes, said the Poet's son; and it was my father that broke down Raftery in the latter end.

There was a man one time set out from Ireland to go to America or some place; a common man looking for work he was. And something happened to the ship on the way, and they had to put to land to mend it. And in the country where they landed he saw a forth, and he went into it, and there he saw the smallest people he ever saw; and they were the Danes that went out of Ireland, and it is foxes they had for dogs, and weasels were their cats.

Then he went back to get into the ship, but it was gone away, and he left behind. So he went back into the forth, and a young man came to meet him, and he told him what had happened. And the young man said: 'Come into the room within, where my father is in bed; for he is out of his health, and you might be able to

serve him.' So they went in, and the father was lying in the bed, and when he heard it was a man from Ireland was in it he said: 'I will give you a great reward if you will go back and bring me a thing I want out of Castle Hacket Hill; for if I had what is there,' he said, 'I would be as young as my own son.' So the man consented to go, and they got a sailing ship ready, and it is what the old man told him, to go back to Ireland. 'And buy a small pig in Galway,' he said, 'and bring it to the mouth of the forth at Castle Hacket and roast it there. And inside the forth there is an enchanted cat that is keeping guard there, and it will come out. And here is a shot-gun and some cross-money,' he said, 'that will kill any fairy or any enchanted thing. And within in the forth,' he said, 'you will find a bottle and a rack-comb, and bring them here to me,' he said.

So the man did as he was told, and he bought the pig and roasted it at the mouth of the forth, and out came the enchanted cat, and it having hair seven inches

long. And he fired the cross-money out of the shot-gun, and the cat went away and he saw it no more. And he got the bottle and the rack, and brought them back to the old man. And he drank what was in the bottle, and racked his hair with the rack, and he got young again, as young as his own son.

And when there is a marriage among the Danes, they put down the land they have in Ireland with whatever else they have, for they expect to come back and to own the country again some day. But whether they will or not, I don't know.

The Danes were surely small men, or how could they live in those little rooms and passages in the raths? I'd have to stoop myself down when I'd go into them. They had the whole country once, and they used to make beer out of the tops of the heather the same way the bees draw honey out of it. And it was on St. John's Night the people lighted wisps and turned them out of Ireland, and that's the reason the wisps are burned ever since.

CAILLEAC-NA-CEARC

I THINK I didn't tell you the story of Cailleac-na-Cearc, the Woman of the Hens, says the old man with the new wife; and how she committed sin.

It was one day they rose up, herself and her twelve children, and there was not bit or drop in the house, and the height of the door of frost and snow was in it; and she sent the husband out to see could he get firing with a little hatchet he had.

And when he went out he got directions to cut a certain tree. And there came out of the tree to him as much as he could carry of lumber of the best of stuff, and he brought it home to the wife.

Well, after a while she bade him go again to the tree and cut it. And there came from it the same lumber of provisions and gold and money and everything they wanted. And the third time she sent him to cut the tree, and the tree spoke to him that time,

and it said: 'You may take what you can this time, but let you never come near me again.' And he brought back more than would fill the corners of the house. And he said to the wife, that was enough.

But she made him go the fourth time, for women is awful, and she wanted to get all that she could; and only for her bidding he didn't like to draw back to the tree. And that time the tree spoke to him again, and it said: 'You have full and plenty, and you'll see the way your missus is, and you going back to the house.' For she was covetous and had no patience, and it was by the Almighty God's will he made a hen of her, and twelve chickens of her twelve children. And she went scraping in the face of the dunghill, and she never left doing that till the day of judgment, picking for her chickens that stopped small as they were always.

When she had too much she wasn't pleased till she got more, and so she couldn't keep it and had nothing at all left her in the heel of the hunt.

I suppose it was God that made the provision within in the tree. For the man was holy. Did he mind seeing his children turned into chickens? He did not. He was a born saint, and it is likely it was a saint talked with him abroad at the tree; and he had full and plenty while he lived; and the day he died the gates of heaven were open, and it was as a white pigeon that he went in through them. That now is a true story, and that is a thing that surely happened.

THE GOATS

THERE was a girl had a sweetheart that was called Shawn Shamus. And through the crying of the Banrighean-na-breena he was brought away into a forth. The girl went to the forth looking for him, and outside of it she saw the Banrighean, the Queen, sitting and she combing her hair, and having a blue dress on her like those flowers that grow in the fields. 'Will you give me back Shawn Shamus?' says the girl. 'I will not,' says the Queen. And she went on talking for a while, the girl asking and the Queen refusing. And at the last the Queen said: 'I will give him to you if you will bring me a hundred barrels of six-penny money, a hundred fillies all of the one colour, a hundred spotted cows, a hundred ganders and a fleet of geese; a hundred slips and a hundred pigs, a hundred goats that are without damage or roguery.' So the girl went looking for all those, and she brought

every one of them to the Queen of the forth except the goats, for she could not get one that was honest, they are all full of roguery. Everything else but the goats she brought. So the Queen gave up Shawn Shamus, and they married and lived happy.

THE CURIOUS WOMAN

THERE will be no eating in the other world, says the red-haired man sitting at the door. 'But there is a tree in it with twelve sorts of fruit, and what would that be for if we were not to eat it?' Well, the first man that went eating fruit made a bad hand of it. He bethought of himself and it going down, and it stopped in his throat and gave us that lump in it ever since. Isn't that a terrible thing for a man to have? But as to the woman, what she ate stopped down, and so it would if she ate another along with it. Women are terrible for eating things. Women are curious, and that is what led her to it. And besides that it was nice-looking, and women like to have nice things. A woman to see a lady, she would want all she would be wearing for herself—red stockings and shoes and dresses, and even to umbrellas.

There was an old couple were past working and

they went travelling the roads, and they met a King that had a palace he had no use for, and he said they could have the use of it. So he brought them in and put them into a big room, and there was a big table with every sort of food on it, and he bade them use what they could of what was there. But there was a board of the table he bade them not to touch, and the reason was he had put a mouse under it that would tell him every word they would say.

Well, when they had ate all they could, the woman began to say she would look what was under that board. 'Do not,' says the man, 'and the King after telling you not to touch it.' 'Sorra fear he to know of it,' says she. But he wouldn't let her do it that night or the next night, but the third night she put out her hand and rose up the board, and out ran the mouse. And they tried to catch it, but you may believe they were not able to come up with it. And so when the King saw they had the board shifted, he turned them out of the palace and they were as poor as before.

NOTE.

I HAVE not changed a word in these stories as they were told to me, but having heard some of them in different versions from different old people, I have sometimes taken a passage or a phrase from one and put it in another where it seemed to fit. *The Seven Fishers* for instance, the beginning of which I have given as told by the old man of a hundred years, drifted into the adventures of *Shawneen* and of *The Bullockeen*, and I took another ending for it; and the story of *Shawneen*, begun in a workhouse, was continued at my own door by a piper from County Kerry. I have only once, in *The Seven Fishers*, taken a few sentences from a story told, not to me, but to another. I tell this, because folk-lorists in these days are expected to be as exact as workers at any other science.

As to the substance of the stories, there is a hint in *Shawneen* of Perseus and Andromeda, and in *The Three Sons* of the Garden of the Hesperides, and of Eden itself in *The Curious Woman*. And who can say whether these have travelled from east to west, or from west to east, for the barony of Kiltartan, in common with at least three continents, holds fragments of the wonder tales told in the childhood of the world.

A. G.

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